

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-15, 18-24, 28-39, and 42-49 are presently active in this case, Claims 6-8, 10, 11, 13, 28-39, 42-44, and 46-48 having been amended and Claim 49 having been added by way of the present Amendment. Claims 1-3, 16, 17, 25-27, 40, and 41 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 13-15, 18-24, 28, 29, 33, 34, 37-39, and 42-48 have been allowed.

Claims 13 and 37 were indicated as being allowable if amended to overcome the indefiniteness rejections.

Claims 28-39, 42-44, and 46-48 was objected to for informalities. These claims have been amended substantially as suggested, with the exception of the holding face means, which have been amended to read first and second means for holding. The Applicant submits that the objections have been overcome, and therefore respectfully requests the withdrawal of the objections to these claims.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 11, 13, 35, and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 11 and 13 have been amended to recite that "ends of said elastically pressing member are fixed to said coupling lens holding unit so as to hold in between said ends said portion of said first coupling lens in contact with said holding faces," and Claims 35 and 37 have been amended to recite that "said elastically pressing means has ends fixed to said optical coupling holding

means so as to hold in between said ends said portion of said first optical coupling means in contact with said first and second means for holding." Thus, the Applicant submits that these claims have been clarified by specifying to what feature the elastically pressing member or means is fixed to. Therefore, the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejections.

Accordingly, Claims 13 and 37 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 6-8 and 30-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakajima et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,512) in view of Iwanaga et al. (JP 8-7294). Additionally, Claims 11, 12, 35, and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakajima et al. in view of Kitahara (JP 8-5882). For the reasons discussed below, the Applicant requests the withdrawal of the obviousness rejections.

Claims 6-8 have been amended to depend from allowed Claims 4 or 5, and Claims 30-32 have been amended to depend from allowed Claims 28 or 29. Accordingly, Claims 6-8 and 30-32 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Additionally, Claim 11 has been amended to depend from allowed Claims 9 or 10, and Claim 35 has been amended to depend from allowed Claims 33 or 34. The Applicants note that some of the subject matter from Claim 10 has been moved to new Claim 49; however, this amendment is not believed to effect the allowability of Claim 10. Accordingly, Claims 11 and 35, as well as the claims that depend therefrom, are believed to be in condition for allowance.

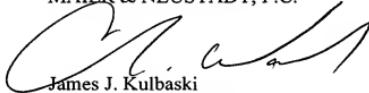
Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the obviousness rejections.

Application Serial No.: 10/663,759  
Reply to Office Action dated March 22, 2007

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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